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Training as We *Will* Fight:
Institutionalizing Permanent Joint Task Forces within the Unified Commands and
Abolishing the "Just in Time" Approach to Crisis Management

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the U.S. Army, the Naval War College, or the Department of the Navy.

Signature:

4 February, 2002

Abstract

Training as We *Will* Fight: Institutionalizing Permanent Joint Task Forces within the Unified Commands and Abolishing the "Just in Time" Approach to Crisis Management

Nearly every major operation since the conclusion of the Gulf War has called for the establishment of a Joint Task Force to manage assets and the conglomeration of forces that are inevitably contributed from each Service. Yet, each Service continues to pursue its own training priorities, independent of consultation with their counterpart Services and often without direct cooperation. Though the four war fighting unified commands are uniquely joint, it cannot be said that the concept of “jointness” is universally embraced in an institutional sense. This paper seeks to demonstrate that given the current international security environment, the Defense Department should undertake two major initiatives to increase the readiness of our Armed Forces: first, to restructure the geographic unified commands from the existing Service Component framework into a series of standing, task organized JTFs that would each be assigned distinct geographic sectors to manage; and second, to direct substantial increases in the exercise of troops either assigned or task organized to standing JTFs for contingency operations. This study will argue that the best way for U.S. forces to develop the characteristics to deal effectively with the full spectrum of future threats is to restructure the Geographic Unified Commands and redefine the general approach to training and exercising of joint forces in the Armed Forces.

Training as We *Will* Fight:
**Institutionalizing Permanent Joint Task Forces within the Unified Commands and
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"New conditions require...new and imaginative methods. Wars are never won in the past."

--General Douglas MacArthur

In April 1996 a civil war was raging in Monrovia, Liberia threatening the lives of American citizens and the US embassy. In response the National Command Authority approved CINC EUCOM's plan to deploy a Joint Task Force (JTF) into Freetown, Sierre Leone made up of Special Operations Forces augmented with a supporting Air Force wing, selected elements from an AC130 squadron, and a group of Army Airborne forces assigned to EUCOM's Southern European Task Force (SETAF) in Italy. When this conglomeration of forces came together as a JTF in Sierre Leone the troops and staff elements tasked with carrying out the non-combatant evacuation and defense of Embassy Monrovia met one another for the first time. While the JTF in Freetown was establishing itself, yet another EUCOM Joint Task Force was dispatched by the CINC to Croatia in response to the tragic crash of Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown's plane into a Dubrovnik mountain-side.

In 1996 European Command had its hands full. Between the brewing ethnic hatreds in sub-Saharan Africa and the ever expanding tensions in the Balkans, the JTFs exercised in Liberia and Croatia are illustrative of the high operational tempo that weighed down then Commander-in-Chief, General George Joulwan. Threats and crises like those facing General Joulwan in 1996 are likely to proliferate in the years to come and, like in Liberia and Croatia, little notice will be given before Joint Task Forces must be deployed. This paper seeks to demonstrate that given the current international security environment, the Defense Department should undertake two major initiatives to increase the readiness of our Armed Forces: first, to restructure the geographic unified commands from the existing Service Component framework into a series of standing, task organized JTFs that would each be assigned distinct geographic sectors to manage; and second, to direct substantial increases in the exercise of troops either assigned or task organized to standing

JTFs for contingency operations. The President's Commission on National Security/21st Century chaired by former Senators Warren Rudman and Gary Hart has articulated a blueprint for the Armed Forces' approach to future military challenges that sets the conditions for these initiatives.

U.S. forces must possess greater flexibility to operate in a range of environments...U.S. forces must be characterized by stealth, speed, range, accuracy, lethality, agility, sustainability, reliability...in order to deal effectively with the spectrum of symmetrical and asymmetrical threats we anticipate over the next quarter century.¹

This study will argue that the best way for U.S. forces to develop the characteristics to deal effectively with the full spectrum of future threats is to restructure the Geographic Unified Commands and redefine the general approach to training and exercising of joint forces.

Addressing Twenty-First Century National Security Challenges

Nearly every major operation since the conclusion of the Gulf War has called for the establishment of a Joint Task Force to manage assets and the conglomeration of forces that are inevitably contributed from each Service. The current campaign on terrorism is similarly, and by necessity, joint and has required unprecedented Inter-Service cooperation. Still, each Service pursues its own training priorities, largely independent of consultation with their counterpart Services and often without direct cooperation. Though the four war fighting unified commands are uniquely joint, it cannot be said that the concept of "jointness" is universally embraced in an institutional sense. In fact, Service-centric paradigms continue to dominate defense planning and inhibit joint forces from achieving optimal levels of readiness.

This Commission believes that the "two major theater wars" yardstick for sizing U.S. forces is not producing the capabilities needed for the varied and complex contingencies...now occurring and likely to increase in the years ahead. These contingencies, often calling for expeditionary interventions or stability operations, require forces different from those designed for major theater war. We believe these contingencies will occur in the future with sufficient regularity and simultaneity as to oblige the United States to adapt portions of its force structure to meet these needs. The overall force would then have the ability to engage effectively in contingencies ranging from

¹ Hart-Rudman Commission, U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century—Phase II Report on a National Security Strategy for the 21st Century, "Seeking a National Strategy: A Concert for Preserving Security and Promoting Freedom," Washington, D.C., April 15, 2000, page 14.

humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, to peace and expeditionary combat operations, to large-scale, high-intensity conventional warfare.²

The national security experts that fill the ranks of the Hart-Rudman Commission are not alone in arguing that dramatic changes must be undertaken. The Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) in 2001 is an eloquent articulation of the Secretary of Defense's intention to move beyond the inertia of current Service-focused approaches to defense planning to achieve greater Service cooperation. Specifically, the QDR makes clear that because the threats of the Twenty-First Century are expected to grow in complexity, developing force structures that increase our responsiveness is among the highest of the Department's priorities.

A central objective of the review was to shift the basis of defense planning from a 'threat-based' model that has dominated thinking in the past to a 'capabilities-based' model for the future. This capabilities-based model focuses more on how an adversary might fight rather than specifically whom the adversary might be or where a war might occur. It recognizes that it is not enough to plan for large conventional wars in distant theaters. Instead, the United States must identify the capabilities required to deter and defeat adversaries who will rely on surprise, deception, and asymmetric warfare to achieve their objectives.³

Implementing a broader, more robust JTF concept may be the key to developing the essential capabilities that will lead to greater combat readiness for U.S. forces. Much has been written about how this training should be accomplished and whether establishing standing Joint Task Force staffs is sensible. The Secretary of Defense has made that decision for the Armed Forces in the QDR 2001 where he dictates that "the Defense Department will examine options for establishing Standing Joint Task Forces (SJTFs). SJTF organizations will seek to develop new concepts to exploit U.S. asymmetric military advantages and joint force synergies."⁴ Still the QDR does not go far enough in describing how JTFs will be developed and nothing is said about how these standing joint task forces will develop into an institutionalized part of the overall force planning architecture.

² Hart-Rudman Commission, Phase II Report, pp. 14-15.

³ Office of the Secretary of Defense, "Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR)," September 30, 2001, page 4.

⁴ QDR, page 34.

Marching Orders from the Secretary of Defense

Standing JTFs that are equipped with a broad array of assets and menu of forces from all Services provide both a truly unique capability and a host of response options for the war fighting CINC. The Secretary of Defense states in the QDR that developing a broad portfolio of military capabilities will lie at the heart of defense planning. It is therefore incumbent upon the Armed Forces to identify options that will achieve that goal.

Creating substantial margins of advantage across key functional areas of military competition (power projection, space, and information) will require developing and sustaining a portfolio of key military capabilities to prevail over current challenges and to hedge against and dissuade future threats. Building upon the current superiority of US conventional forces...ensuring US access to distant theaters, defending against threats to the US and allied territory...It will also require exploiting...its ability to integrate highly distributed military forces in synergistic combinations for highly complex joint military operations.⁵

Optimizing the effectiveness of such highly integrated and distributed forces will require innovative approaches to training and a responsive command structure. Continuing to assemble “pick-up teams” of forces to conduct highly complex joint operations without exploring alternatives would contradict the intentions of the Secretary of Defense. A careful reading of the QDR makes clear that his view of defense transformation includes a reevaluation of the current force architecture. And if change must come then the question is, “How should we array our forces?”

The synergy that true jointness brings is the most powerful transformation concept. Jointness mandates more cohesion and continuity to the operational level of war. Jointness is essential to gain the synergy inherent in greater integration and interdependence of Service capabilities...These in turn allow the joint force to...apply force with greater precision, speed, and simultaneity throughout a multidimensional battle space.⁶

Establishing an appropriate force architecture, one that meets the goals established by the Secretary of Defense, is the first step toward effective transformation of our forces at the operational level of war.

⁵ QDR, page 15.

⁶ Transformation Study Group (Chairman, General Jim McCarthy, USAF-Ret.), “Transformation Study Report to the Secretary of Defense: Transforming Military Operational Capabilities,” Washington, D.C., April 27, 2001, page 7.

Organizing Our Forces for the Future

The U.S. Armed Forces must become more responsive, more lethal, more flexible, and more effective as we begin to face far more complicated missions abroad. An effective start in addressing these challenges might be to shed Service parochialisms and create conditions where Services are "thrust together" on a more permanent basis. The threats to our national interests are growing and becoming more complex while our Armed Forces have, as yet, neither refined their structure to keep pace with the threat environment nor overhauled their approach crisis response.

Some situations may require the capabilities of only one Service, but in most cases, a joint force...will be employed...The complexity of future operations also requires that, in addition to operating jointly, our forces have the capability to participate effectively as one element of a unified national effort.⁷

In order to realize the Chairman's (Joint Chiefs of Staff) "Joint Vision" further integration of joint forces will be required. The friction currently experienced by JTFs during the initial hours of responding to a crisis, as in Liberia in 1996, is normal and to be expected when a staff and patch-quilt of troops work together for the first time. This friction would be diminished by creating more opportunities for these same staff and troops to work together; joint military planners should consider focusing on exercising joint forces regularly, in the form of JTFs that are outfitted "from head to toe." "Forming standing joint task forces from head to toe is an expensive proposition but it might be expected to provide the most effective joint fighting force on short notice."⁸ The real challenge of the Defense Department is to select a new, more relevant organizational structure for the future, one that is flexible enough to address the threats and challenges that the United States will face for the next twenty years and beyond.

Some of the Unified CINCs are taking it up in their own area and are starting to produce sort of standardized approaches to JTFs, but every CINC has his own approach, and in some cases, the CINC doesn't have an approach. He just tasks the Joint Force to have his approach...There are so

⁷ Joint Staff, Director for Strategic Plans and Policy, J5; Strategy Division, "Joint Vision 2020," U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., June 2000, page 17.

⁸ Robert D. Worley, "Challenges to Train, Organize, and Equip the Complete Combined Arms Team: The Joint Task Force," Institute for Defense Analysis, Alexandria, Virginia, September 1998, page 24.

many disparate ways of doing this business that there isn't a standardized way of approaching it. Therefore there is not a standardized way of training for it, at all.⁹

Restructuring the CINCdoms

One option for restructuring the regional commands is to divide the operational area into three geographical sections and assign corresponding standing JTFs (outfitted “head to toe”) to subordinate commanders. This option has the potential to both focus training and, through the direct application of a standing JTF, capitalize on the initial crucial hours of planning during crises. Geographic JTFs offer CINCs two distinct advantages: first, a set of well defined capabilities are maintained and ready for immediate employment; and second, by breaking down their regions into sectors, subordinate JTF commanders become intensely familiar with their respective sectors. This option provides the CINC not only a robust capability but also a force that will react more rapidly than an ad hoc collection of forces. The force package assigned to each of these three permanent JTFs may well change from CINC to CINC and would likely be refined for each mission based upon the threat situation. Each JTF would ideally have a baseline capability that allows each JTF commander to exercise both his staff functions as well as the operational functions in a training environment. Developing well integrated joint organizations, below the theatre level, will ensure more rapid and focused approaches to crisis response than are currently employed. “The JTF formed at the moment of need is certainly flexible but is unlikely to be effective because internal friction will be so high that the staff will not be able to use its available capabilities.”¹⁰ The key to increasing the regional readiness of U.S. forces appears to be forming JTFs before the “moment of need.”

Focusing defense transformation efforts on developing joint concepts is consistent with the guidance provided by the Secretary of Defense in the QDR and logical given the tapestry of threats to our national interests. After all, this proliferation of threats will, in all likelihood, lead to increases in military intervention.

⁹ Stephen M. Olechnowicz, “Identification and Evaluation of Organizational Structures and Measures for Analysis of Joint Task Forces,” Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, December 1999, page 46.

¹⁰ Daniel R. Walker, “The Organization and Training of Joint Task Forces”, Daniel R. Walker, School of Advanced Airpower Studies, Air University Press, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, April 1996, page 37.

The joint force, because of its flexibility and responsiveness, will remain the key to operational success in the future. The integration of core competencies provided by the individual Services is essential to the joint team...To build the most effective force for 2020, we must be fully joint: intellectually, operationally, organizationally, doctrinally, and technically.¹¹

Successfully integrating core competencies and thereby becoming more fully joint requires a complete re-examination of how the Armed Forces structure themselves fifteen years after the Goldwater-Nichols Act, ten years after the Cold War's end, and in the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. This is the backdrop before which the U.S. military will address future threats when called upon.

The vast expanses of each geographical unified command are too large to expect a CINC to forge strong relationships with all U.S. Ambassadors, heads of state, and foreign military chiefs in their assigned region. Yet these relationships are likely the key to his successful management of regional military affairs and implementing of a theatre engagement plan. The span of each CINC's control is so broad right now that they must depend upon their Service component commanders to fill gaps. However, these component commanders cannot provide the type of comprehensive (how to employ joint forces) military advice that a CINC requires in a crisis. If JTF commanders were to focus on specific sectors within their respective CINC's geographical region then they would inevitably have the opportunity to forge critically important relationships with officials and, perhaps, be in a position to provide more poignant advice to the CINC in times of crisis. "Geographically oriented JTFs have the advantage of being able to familiarize themselves with the languages, cultures, infrastructure, and allied militaries in a specific region."¹² Still, there promises to be no rush to such a dramatic restructuring.

Enormous obstacles exist to creating standing joint task forces. Chief among these is the hesitancy each Service will probably exhibit in relinquishing significant peacetime control over portions of its forces. However, if the key to America's future military success lies in new ideas and fresh ways of thinking, our nation's Armed Forces must never be afraid to explore such ideas and engage in such thinking.¹³

¹¹ "Joint Vision 2020," page 2.

¹² Worley, "Challenges...", page 25.

¹³ Marc R. Hildenbrand, "Standing Joint Task Forces—A Way to Enhance America's War fighting Capabilities?" School of Advanced Military Studies, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, October 27, 1992, page 40.

Some will question the effectiveness of focusing restructuring efforts on designating "sub-CINCs" with commands that include geographical areas. As three star flag officers, JTF commanders would be well capable of balancing the responsibilities associated with managing a section of the Regional Command and seasoned well enough to deal effectively with both the diplomatic and interagency challenges they would inevitably face. It would then become a matter of cooperation and burden sharing where CINCs maintain the ability to place emphasis where they deem necessary within JTF sectors and JTF commanders focus on both cultivating relationships within their sectors with foreign military counterparts and developing an atmosphere of teamwork with respective U.S. country teams.

The duties of the CINC and the JTF commander are now divided. The CINC plans and organizes the operation, and the JTF commander shapes it in execution. If the operation is purely a military operation, the operational-level commander has a series of relatively difficult, but straightforward, decisions to make. If the operation includes civilian factors, the variety of decisions not only increase, but the commander's options for how to proceed in the operation also increase enormously...To deal with these operations, the commander should understand the entire context of the operation. He may then use this understanding to develop creative solutions to operational problems. Creative solutions may require decisions that modify orders, eliminate the distinction between military and civilian, or require the commander to take on more bureaucratic risk than his position normally allows.¹⁴

Restructuring the CINCDoms to empower permanent JTF commanders has the potential to meld the efforts of these commanders with the CINCs more completely in every region and allows for the development of creative solutions. As a three star billet such a sub-CINC position would provide ample opportunity for these officers to grasp the entire context of operations in their sectors, afford the chance to hone their skills before a crisis erupts, and provide fertile ground to groom future CINCs. And indeed the challenges and responsibilities of JTF commanders would expand with or without a change in the organizational structure of the "CINCDoms."

The Department of Defense has stated the importance of expanding the JTF concept. Still the current emphasis remains on establishing JTF headquarters and staffs rather than outfitting JTFs from "head to toe" with troops and equipment. The question of whether a functional or geographic JTF is preferable has yet to

¹⁴ Hildenbrand, "Standing Joint Task Forces...", page 58.

be settled at the Pentagon. The type of crises that JTFs will manage though cannot be satisfactorily forecasted and, as threats evolve, anticipating these challenges may yield functional JTFs an increasingly problematic proposition, since their “functions” may change as the threats change. Instead, assigning each standing and permanent joint task force geographical responsibility may be a more manageable methodology with greater prospects for long term relevance.

Achieving DOD’s strategic goals mandates embarking on the long-term transformation of U.S. military capabilities. It requires a substantial investment in explicit searches for new and improved capabilities. These capabilities may derive from innovative operational concepts...new organizational arrangements, and enhanced training. The Department will experiment with new forces and organizations----including new joint task force organizations---to address those operational challenges.¹⁵

Developing standing geographic JTFs also provides significant advantages from a training perspective. These advantages are derived from the JTF sector commander’s ability to exercise his command and have a strong voice in mapping out opportunities for joint training.

The Imperatives of Regional Joint Training

When a commander is issued a warning order to organize a JTF in response to a crisis situation he will analyze the mission, identify the resources he needs, and construct his team from the best joint organizational architecture available to him. In many instances, the time from receipt of the tasking order to deployment in the crisis area is only a few weeks, forcing the JTF to quickly put together his organization.¹⁶ This accentuates the importance of focusing joint training on exercises that test the JTF commander, his staff, and the troops assigned or task organized to him.

In an international security environment that is going to be defined not by major theater wars but, more likely, by small scale and unexpected contingencies, allowing the Services to remain insular in their approaches to training will only inhibit further advances in readiness and revolutions in joint cooperation.

¹⁵ QDR, page 62.

Waiting until a crisis erupts to activate new organizational frameworks and bring troops together as a JTF to respond are by no means optimal conditions. Yet Service component headquarters are often given the mission of planning and carrying out JTF missions in exigent circumstances; these are indeed outmoded methods of preparing JTFs to respond to the complex challenges they will face.

Forming JTFs from established component headquarters preserves Service prerogatives. Service-based headquarters are not organized, trained, or equipped to command and control joint forces. However, they are sources of general officer billets and strong seats of power within a CINC's area of operations. Designating a component as a "joint" headquarters preserves Service warfare at the expense of joint warfare.¹⁷

Since the Goldwater-Nichols Act established structural and command relationships (in 1986) and, in effect, got it right on a grander scale, the policy community has lauded the logical breakdown of "CINCdoms." "The CINCs command so much respect in their theatres and in Washington that they often shape foreign relations strategy."¹⁸

Still military leadership clings to ad hoc arrangements when it comes to apportioning forces for smaller scale contingencies. Although many JTF "shell" staffs (operating under the current policy of joint augmentation) are being exercised at the two and three star level more frequently there is always great ambiguity concerning which forces would be assigned for a given crisis. What is more certain is that the troops that are notionally assigned to these JTFs for planning purpose are probably not themselves aware of what it means to have their unit on the menu of augmentation forces or what is expected of them if they are asked to join the effort. This means that if a crisis does erupt the JTF staff will deploy quickly and efficiently. Meanwhile the troops assigned to the JTF in the warning order will be alerted from different corners of the CINC's area of operations, and meet their new chain of command and adjacent units for the first time with the stakes high and cost of mistakes intolerable.

¹⁶ Olechnowicz, "Identification and Evaluation...", page 44.

¹⁷ Worley, page 19.

¹⁸ Dana Priest, "Standing Up to State and Congress," *Washington Post*, Washington D.C., September 30, 2000, page 1.

The training and exercises that led to such great success for U.S. forces in the Gulf War offers a reasonable analogy to the type of joint training and exercises that should be considered in this new security environment. National security experts agree that a major theatre war is not among the most likely challenges in the immediate future, though intense preparation for the "high end" threat scenarios must continue. The general approach to realistic training espoused in preparation for the Gulf War offers military planners lessons that may well apply to preparing U.S. forces for smaller scale contingencies. There is much written by military thinkers about how to establish command relationships at the operational level of war and how to attain readiness at the tactical level. But there is little written about joining these two worlds to achieve a higher degree of readiness, a higher level of preparedness for uncertainty at the operational level. A new and more regularly exercised joint task force command structure (below theatre level) may well provide more opportunities to train efficiently and, as a result, have the potential to enhance readiness. The philosophy of "training as we fight" is applicable and transferable to all levels of command.

The training of a JTF, like its organization, is the responsibility of the JTF commander. Because commanders, missions, and situations are so varied, the wide latitude enjoyed by a commander is beneficial. But, given the time-sensitive nature of an ad hoc JTF, there is a definite limit to the amount of effective training a newly formed JTF can accomplish before the beginning of operations. Many pieces of the organization are essentially as trained as they will get when the JTF is formed. Clearly, the effectiveness of a JTF is affected by training that takes place before its activation. A number of approaches to joint training exist, though none has been consistently used in preparation for prior operations.¹⁹

Though the activation of Joint Forces Command has begun efforts to standardize joint training and increase the quality of joint training as a whole---training JTFs in preparation for contingency operations is highly problematic due to the ad hoc nature of calling on forces. Until these units are fully formed well in advance and train to face conditions that are analogous to those they will experience in crisis situations, problems will persist. There are significant challenges associated with bringing joint forces together regularly to conduct tactical training, not the least of which is the high cost to deploy forces on such a large scale. The future of warfare and military operations other than war involves joint forces in all except the most unusual of cases

¹⁹ Walker, "The Organization and Training of...", page 25.

and therefore innovative and cost-effective methods of training fully formed JTFs must be identified by military planners.

Measures of Readiness

If military readiness can be measured by the opportunities both troops and staff are afforded to work together before deploying under crisis conditions then joint forces are currently not given the opportunities they need to maximize their readiness and, in turn, reduce their vulnerability once on the ground. The current “just in time” approach to managing crises does not provide joint forces with the opportunity to interact and develop working relationships with one another. This is so because Service component commands inevitably focus the bulk of their training on Service specific sets of tasks at the troop level. This does not suggest that the importance of refining Service core competencies would be diminished in any way. On the contrary, this study is recommending the very building block approach to training that all Services currently adhere to with the addition of another, more prominent block---training joint task forces together as the culmination of each Service’s efforts to achieve readiness.

We must carefully examine...aspects of the human element of command and control...Leaders of the joint force must analyze and understand the meaning of unit cohesion in the context of small, widely dispersed units that are now envisioned...The potential for over-centralization of control and the capacity for relatively junior leaders to make decisions with strategic impact are of particular importance.²⁰

If junior military leaders are to operate in a joint environment effectively in crisis and combat, then they must have the same opportunities in training. Much is written in “Joint Vision 2020” about the “human element” of command and control, but nothing is mentioned concerning the human element of battle or the importance of forging the bonds of camaraderie. “One advantage of the transition to standing joint task force organizations is an ability to provide more opportunities for joint and combined experiments and exercises, both to discover existing weaknesses and exploit emerging opportunities.”²¹ In short, standing JTFs outfitted

²⁰ “Joint Vision 2020,” pages 39-40.

²¹ QDR, page 62.

“head to toe” have the advantage of developing an atmosphere of camaraderie among the forces assigned to them.

The Single Service Approach---Training in Isolation

In order to effectively address the complex security challenges of the Twenty-First Century the Services and their major commands must cooperate more closely, more regularly, and relinquish the prevailing "single Service" approach to training and readiness. “Most importantly joint commands must develop and foster a joint professional culture, a requirement that presents a significant challenge to Service and joint training.”²² The time required to bring a joint task force together under pressure is likely to become more valuable as the expectation for speed of deployment increases. If this precious time is spent establishing new working relationships and deciding what to do next, rather than focusing on implementing existing and pre-established procedures, then it must be categorized as time lost. As time is added to planning and deployment sequences for joint forces, the complexity of these assigned missions increases proportionately.

The joint force team is going to have to work together because there isn't going to be as many of us as in the past...we won't have the luxury of setting up a separate Navy theater in the Central Pacific and an Army theater in the Southwest Pacific like we did in World War II, when we had hundreds of ships and 90 divisions of soldiers.²³

This seismic change in approach to joint training would not supplant the inherent need for each Service to ensure that individual and collective task training is indeed accomplished and, as we have become accustomed, done to a high standard. Indeed, the infantrymen and artillerymen in the Army must learn to shoot and fire straight, the aviators and air crews must become proficient flying at night, and the surface warfare sailors must be prepared to escort and defend their aircraft carriers. Nothing should change in terms of training to do the basics well, but we should take a close look at what tasks are trained habitually (on each

²² QDR, page 33.

²³ Colonel Dan Bolger [Director of Strategy, Joint Forces Command], interview in "Transforming the Military: Putting it All Together" Jim Garamone of American Forces Press Service
http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jun2001/n06212001_200106212.html (December 27, 2001).

Service's formal or informal "mission essential task list") and evaluate their importance vis a vis taking part in a joint exercise that includes all forces assigned to a JTF. Training these JTFs means a substantial investment would have to be made in developing the tactical side of joint training. "In particular, the possible establishment of a Joint National Training Center (would be intended) to help mitigate future risk via expanded experimentation."²⁴ If done realistically, JTF training would be conducted across state boundaries in the United States and Country borders overseas---in the same fashion as real world deployments. Substantial resources would have to be allocated so that such large scale joint training operations (those including both intermediate staging bases and forward operating bases) are fully planned and implemented.

Currently, joint forces are often being thrust together on short notice to conduct highly complex operations during crises. It would be a dramatic move toward increasing readiness, if these same joint forces were exercised regularly in a training setting, when the stakes are not as high. A good metaphor to illustrate the current approach to employing JTFs is the conduct of an all-star game in professional sports. The coaching staff and players have been selected from around the league in question for their talent and the success they have enjoyed with other teams. But with little time to practice together as an all-star team, all star games are rarely model demonstrations of teamwork, mistakes are often made because working relationships have not been fully formed. If joint forces continue to come together for the first time in crises, following the seasoned directions of a standing JTF staffs and commanders, then despite the best efforts of these "coaching staffs," mistakes will inevitably be made in execution. Tactical commanders that have been placed under the pressure of either enemy fire or have faced a crisis that has demanded a military response will testify that rehearsals and repetition are the keys to success. Adolph von Schnell proclaimed his general philosophy for effective combat training in his work Battle Leadership (published after four years of fighting in World War I), in effect "What you practice you do well in battle, what you don't you won't."²⁵ This study is based on the premise that certain aspects of readiness at the operational level of war are no different than at

²⁴QDR, page 62.

²⁵ Adolph von Schnell, Battle Leadership, Marine Corps Association, Quantico, Virginia, June 1987.

the tactical level; whenever possible, troops should train together before they are thrust into crisis situations if we are to have a reasonable expectation that they will perform well.

Retired General Barry McCaffrey (former CINC SOUTHCOM) recently wrote about the importance he saw in training large units together, as he reflected on the U.S. Armed Forces' approach to training espoused in the years that led up to the Gulf War. The general lessons he reveals are just as applicable today as they were ten years ago, and arguably, transferable to the new and more dynamic threat environment military forces face today and will no doubt face well into the future.

A crucial factor in improving doctrinal initiatives was that commanders and units practiced and honed concepts under realistic conditions. Beginning with top gun air combat school by the Navy, the services developed state-of-the-art, force-on-force training and exercises linking doctrine and new systems under realistic conditions. Such training produced leaders whose individual and collective success (and promotions) were based on demanding and fully transparent exercises. The Army National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Air Force Red Flag at Nellis Air Force Base, Marine Air Ground Combat Center at Twenty-nine Palms, and Navy instrumented sea warfare training in the Caribbean allowed war fighters to make fatal mistakes in a realistic battle lab instead of combat. At joint training centers, combat leaders underwent a painful learning process that often damaged their egos but saved lives in war. A training atmosphere of candor, rapid feedback, and defined outcome standards was critical.²⁶

The QDR's careful reference to the need for a joint training center is precisely the sort of visionary approach to preparing for future challenges that was employed in the years leading up to the Gulf War. The lessons of our immediate past are instructive as new approaches to joint training are considered.

Transforming Joint Training Methodologies and Modes of Thought

The act of deploying on short notice is an art that can only be honed by "doing." Whenever possible, JTF training should involve tactical units in real world scenarios, where troops and their leaders are working through the countless frustrations associated with moving forces and accomplishing military tasks under the pressure of a deadline. Under these circumstances the creative tension that builds in the minds of servicemen as planes are taking off, ships are disembarking, and troops are deploying forward is a powerful learning

²⁶ Barry McCaffrey, "Lessons of Desert Storm," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, National Defense University, Washington, D.C. Winter 2000-01, page 14.

tool. Again, this type of training does not preclude the need for JTF staff and commander level training, on the contrary it should be part of the building block process to reach a level where major joint exercises cement their teamwork.

The Role of Joint Forces Command

In its current form joint training is often limited to experimentation and simulation. Battle experiments and intricate simulations like those planned by the Joint Forces Command (JFCOM) may not be enough to encourage and maintain long-term readiness for the Armed Forces given the growing complexity of the threat environment. This will not be for lack of trying. There are a series of sophisticated experiments on JFCOM's training schedule that focus on challenging commanders and their staffs. JFCOM is taking significant measures to push "the wagon of readiness." However, more must be done and more control and influence must be granted this unique unified command if JFCOM is to reach a point where it begins to "pull the wagon" and drive requirements that move beyond the scope of interoperability and staff management.

Backed by a congressional mandate, the services are climbing aboard the interoperability bandwagon...Not that there's a lot of choice. Joint Forces Command has veto authority on projects that don't conform to its interoperability guidelines. How far the wagon has traveled will be measured in next summer's Millennium Challenge 2002, the largest and most complicated battle experiment ever undertaken. Last week, 700 people gathered here to plan it. More than 13,000 troops will take part, mostly at bases in the western United States. The major test items include Joint Interactive Planning, Common Relevant Operational Picture, Adaptive Joint Command and Control, Effects Based Operations, Focused Logistics/Strategic Deployment, and Non-kinetic Technologies.²⁷

The Millennium Challenge is designed to develop a formula for training that will provide JTFs with an appropriate complement of capabilities. Interestingly, even the terms used to describe the training objectives are foreign to most Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines. As warfare becomes more complex and the challenge of directing military operations more pronounced, military leaders appear to relish the opportunity, either through contractors or their own analysis, to make more complicated what are the military's most basic challenges. The military must work together more closely, solve problems more rapidly, and prepare for situations where there is no more time to learn. At the point of crisis there is no time for intellectual

discussions about the “relevance of non-kinetic technologies” or “the common relevance of an operational picture.” Though the importance of integrating relevant technological advances into joint operations is undeniable, the issue becomes one of priorities. Warfare has always been and will remain an intensely human endeavor. This study argues that priority should be given to developing human relationships and expertise at all levels in joint training---under pressure---in order to better understand where emerging technologies can best be applied. The timing and security environment may be ripe for JFCOM to take some bold steps to truly test joint forces. Joint exercises that test both staff functions and recreate the tensions of a full deployment have the potential to both increase readiness and forge the relationships so critical to mission success in a crisis. As with Liberia and Croatia in 1996, when crises erupt, staffs and troops must deploy “as they are.” It is reasonable to expect that JTFs will perform at a higher level if they are deployed in a configuration they recognize and with troops from other Services that they know well and trust from the “practice fields.”

The JTF concept has the potential to provide war fighting CINCs with revolutionary versatility and flexibility. Each of the following recommendations reflect opportunities to capitalize on the Secretary of Defense’s decision to “experiment with new forces and organizations, including new joint task force organizations.”²⁸ With an eye toward the future, this study offers four recommendations to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Recommendations to the Chairman

Divide the Unified Commands into Three Sectors and Assign Each Sector a Fully Formed, Standing JTF.

The division of each regional CINCDom into three logical sectors will at once make more manageable the overwhelming responsibilities of the war fighting CINCs and provide the opportunity for JTF commanders to more carefully and collectively develop relationships with Ambassadors and foreign counterparts in each region. Such a division will create conditions where the CINCs are both better able to manage multiple crises in their regions and ensure, once established, considerably more direct attention to each sector.

²⁷ Bolger, "Transforming the Military...", page 1.

Construct and Develop Four Joint National Training Centers. In order to effectively simulate the many and varied challenges joint forces will face in the coming years, there must be venues created to exercise their capabilities and develop the habitual relationships among joint forces at the tactical level. These training centers will allow for JTFs to conduct training exercises from marshaling area to intermediate staging base to forward operating base to mission specific area of operation. Establishing the centers in four separate locations (ideally a combination of CONUS and OCONUS) would provide joint forces exercise and evaluation opportunities at each stage of a joint operation. Creating an environment where real-world operating conditions can be achieved would provide a much needed boost to the readiness of the U.S. Armed Forces over the longer term.

Dramatically Expand the Budget and Veto Authority of Joint Forces Command. By making JFCOM the source of all funds for JTF training that involve staffs and troops, the war fighting CINCs will then begin to work with JFCOM out of necessity rather than out of obligation. JFCOM must become a driver of requirements rather than an institution that is largely studying solutions. JFCOM should be afforded the power and influence to put institutional pressure on the Services to support comprehensive joint training exercises and provide greater leverage for the CINCs in expanding joint training opportunities for their forces.

Institutionalize the Imperative of Regularly Training with JTF Forces. The Services and Geographic Unified Commands should be directed to turn more completely, and practically, toward supporting implementation of the Standing (“head to toe”) JTF concept. The Services should be directed to make a regular and habitual commitment to support training and ensure the joint forces they commit will have a reasonable expectation of working alongside one another in a crisis situation. By institutionalizing this aspect of the JTF concept U.S. forces will inevitably be more effective in responding to crises. Cooperation should no longer be a nuance of training, but rather an extension of it.

²⁸ QDR, page 62.

This study suggests that joint military planners charged with developing the future joint force architecture and investigating training methodologies for these forces should move beyond experimentation and simulation to determine first, what is possible and next, what is optimal. Moving past the point where training joint commanders and their staffs are the highest priority in preparing JTFs for crises is an important first step. Complicated battle experiments will continue to challenge the collective expertise of senior military leadership and prepare them well for higher command. However, equally important will always be the conduct of regular exercises that bring together elements of each of our Services to share the hardships of realistic joint training and ultimately bond these joint forces as a team. The two things which can provide a JTF with appropriate capability are the one's lacking in the concepts which rely on augmentation and forming "just in time" to respond to crises: training time and routine interaction.²⁹ An expanded and institutionalized joint task force concept creates conditions where joint forces will train as they expect to fight and, as a result, would effectively abolish the "just in time" approach to crisis management in the United States Armed Forces.

²⁹ John G. Roos, "Joint Task Forces: Mix 'n' Match Solutions to Crisis Response," *Armed Forces Journal International*, (January 1993), page 34.

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